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President Shelly Lowers Navajo Flag in Honor of Fallen Code Talker

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said the Navajo Nation collectively mourns the loss of Navajo Code Talker Albert Smith, 88, who passed away Wednesday morning.

President Shelly has ordered the Navajo Nation Flag be lowered from sunrise April 19 through sundown April 22 in honor of Code Talker Smith.

“Vice President Rex Lee Jim, First Lady Martha Shelly and myself offer our prayers and condolences to the family of Code Talker Smith. His legacy of being a Code Talker will be remembered for generations to come. The Navajo Nation mourns the loss of one of our modern day heroes and warriors,” President Shelly said.

Code Talker Smith was born Dec. 13, 1924. He was Salt People Clan and born for Black Streak Wood People.

Code Talker Smith served in the 4th Marine Division Battalion, 23rd regiment during World War II and served in Saipan, Tinian, Iwo Jima and the Marshall Islands. He began his service as a Code Talker in 1942.



Code Talker Albert Smith, 88, served in World War II as a Navajo Code Talker.

“I think about our Code Talkers and their deeds, it makes me proud to know that these young Navajo men helped defeat the Japanese. Code Talker Smith was among those young men who used our language to defeat the enemy. They came home without being able to tell us of their deeds. We recognize them today and their heroic deeds,” President Shelly said.

Code Talker Smith also served as an advisor to the movie “Windtalkers,” a movie that depicted the inception and service of the Navajo Code Talkers.

In 2001, he was honored with the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service during World War II.

Code Talker Smith also was an honored guest in New York’s Fifth Avenue Veteran’s Day Parade last November.

Code Talker Smith is survived by his daughter, Alberta Holman; brothers, George Smith of Mariano Lake, N.M., Donald Smith of Bluewater, N.M., Leonard Smith of Sundance, and Phillip Lee Smith of Monument Valley, Utah; sisters, Yvonne Denetclaw of Fruitland, N.M., Florence Dick of Iyanbito, N.M., Phyllis King of Iyanbito, and Diane Smith of Sundance; and two grandchildren.

Code Talker Smith was preceded in death by his wife, Helen Smith, of Laguna, N.M.; parents, Red and Betsy Dawoola Smith; stepmother Johanna Smith; brothers Sherman Pinto, Ray Smith, George Smith; sisters Mary Christine Begay and Dorothy Jaramillo.

A rosary is scheduled to be held 7 p.m. tonight, Thursday night, at St. Joseph Church in Laguna, N.M. Funeral services are scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. Friday, April 19, at the same church.

“Code Talker Smith will be remembered as a educator, warrior and a hero among our Navajo people,” President Shelly said.

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